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IO AND AF FOR FRONT OFFICE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: UNSC: D/SYG MIGIRO BRIEFS COUNCIL ON ZIMBABWE

REF: USUN 593

1 (C) SUMMARY: In a July 8 meeting the Security Council heard a briefing on the situation in Zimbabwe from Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro, in which she emphasized the fact that all three African observer missions in Zimbabwe had condemned the 6/27 elections and its results, dubbing the current crisis a "moment of truth" for democracy in Africa. In subsequent consultations, the UK, France, Belgium, Italy, Croatia, Burkina Faso, Panama and Costa Rica voiced support for the U.S.-backed sanctions resolution. South Africa and Russia strongly criticized the U.S. proposal, while China, Indonesia, Vietnam and Libya made more muted statements on the importance of negotiation and the need for the Security Council to take a narrow view of its mandate. END SUMMARY.

Europeans, Latins, Burkina in favor

12. (C) European and Latin American members of the Security Council made strong statements of support for the U.S. resolution, with France, the UK and Belgium offering to co-sponsor the text. Italy and Croatia voiced their support for passage of the resolution as soon as possible. Costa Rica argued that failure to enact sanctions would undermine the Council's prestige in light of the Zimbabwean government's "contempt" for efforts to mediate the conflict. Burkina Faso stressed that its support for the resolution should be considered not as a condemnation of the Zimbabwean government but as support for the appropriate amount of pressure required to prod the government to the negotiating table. Panama expressed some squeamishness over the Chapter 7 threat determination contained in the resolution, but rationalized its support by claiming that in Zimbabwe there is "enough of a threat" to international peace and security to justify sanctions.

Sparks fly in opposition

13. (C) South African Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo acknowledged the severity of the situation in Zimbabwe but alleged that the U.S. sanctions proposal was "aimed at the people of Zimbabwe" and that if the Council approves sanctions "you are going to blow up Zimbabwe." Kumalo then directly accused "the Europeans" of wanting to install Morgan Tsvangirai as president before launching into an emotional speech about South Africa's stabilizing role in Zimbabwe and his personal history in the ANC. Vietnam, China, Indonesia and Libya each made brief statements questioning the utility of sanctions and emphasizing the importance of a negotiated solution in Zimbabwe. China and Vietnam emphasized the need for the Council to act "prudently" and within its mandate.

14. (C) Russian PermRep Vitaliy Churkin delivered the most forceful statement against the U.S. sanctions resolution,

citing "well-founded objections" to the Security Council's involvement and stating that the Council had never before interfered in a matter related to elections in a member state. Churkin alluded to the fact that supporters have the necessary votes to pass the resolution, but cautioned that "this arithmetic of votes is not suitable for the Security Council" and that any U.S. move to advance to a vote today or tomorrow would be "excessively hasty." In a separate conversation with Ambassador Khalilzad, Churkin denied having instructions to veto the resolution, but said that Russia's opposition was closely tied to South Africa's and he could not rule out the possibility. Russian experts later advised that the matter was being handled "at the highest level" and they would not have instructions until Friday, July 11.

Khalilzad